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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0617
INFO WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE
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UNCLAS GUATEMALA 001458

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS
PLEASE PASS TO S/CT RHONDA SHORE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PTER ASEC GT
SUBJECT: Guatemala: 2009 Country Reports on Terrorism

REF: A) 09 STATE 109980

¶1. (SBU) Per reftel, Embassy Guatemala's 2009 Report on Terrorism is below. This report

was compiled by Political Officer Gina M. Werth, available at email: WerthGM@state.gov ; tel. (502) 2326-4636.

¶2. (SBU) Guatemala does not suffer from a general terrorist threat and there is no evidence of

extremism or fundraising to support terrorist activities. Moreover, there were no terrorist attacks in Guatemala in 2009. However, the security situation in Guatemala continued to deteriorate due to increased infiltration from narcotraffickers in large swaths of the country, greater economic hardship, and crime stemming from gangs and extortion rings.

U.S. assistance supported Guatemala's anti-money laundering, anti-corruption, and border security efforts. The U.S. Department of Defense continued to train the Guatemalan military's counterterrorist unit. In addition to threats posed by transnational narcotics organizations, Guatemala is a major alien smuggling route from Central and South America, which makes it a potential transit point for terrorists seeking to gain access to the United States.

Corruption, an ineffective criminal justice system, and a lack of resources have limited Guatemala's ability to combat transnational crime, especially in remote parts of the country. Guatemala's borders are porous and lack adequate coverage by police or military personnel. However, Guatemalan authorities have been cooperative with the United States in investigating potential terrorism leads.
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